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(54) **GENERATING CONTENT FOR
PROMOTIONAL MESSAGES BASED ON
DISTANCE**

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H04W 4/023; H04W 4/025; H04W 4/04;
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H04L 29/08675

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Aug. 6, 2010.

(51) **Int. Cl.**
G06Q 30/00 (2012.01)
G06Q 30/02 (2012.01)

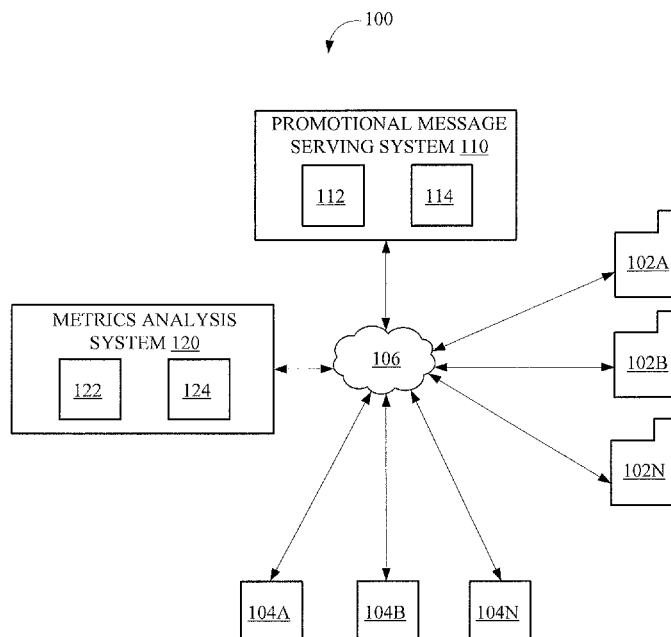
(52) **U.S. Cl.**
CPC **G06Q 30/0261** (2013.01)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**
CPC G06Q 90/00; G06Q 20/3224; G06Q

(57) **ABSTRACT**

Apparatus and method for transferring promotional messages to a mobile communication device. A promotional message is generated for display on a mobile communication device. The promotional message is associated with an entity having a physical location. The promotional message has a plurality of different types of content each associated with a different distance between the mobile communication device and a physical location of the entity. The generated promotional message is thereafter stored in a memory. A controller selects and transfers the promotional message to the mobile communication device responsive to a detected distance between the mobile communication device and the physical location. The transferred promotional message displays, on the device, a selected one of the different types of content corresponding to the detected distance.

12 Claims, 10 Drawing Sheets



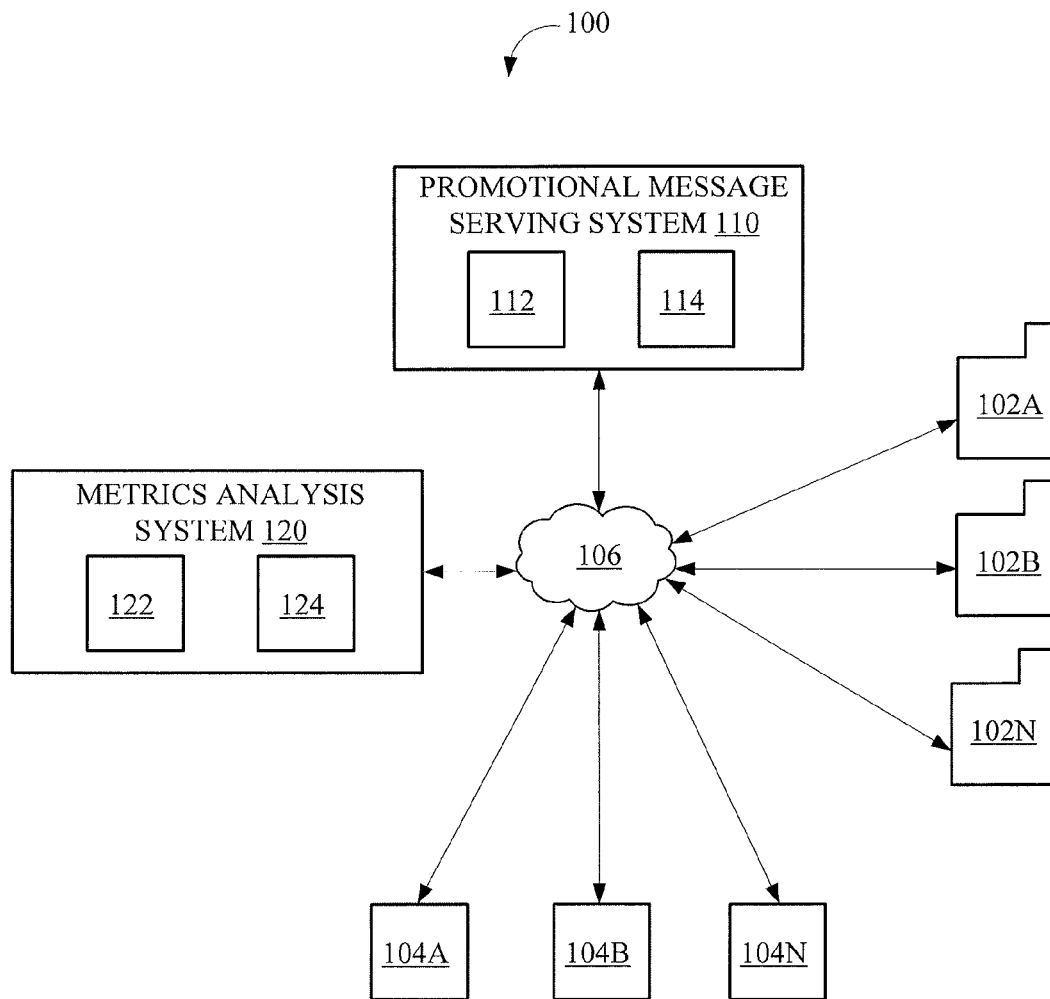


FIG. 1

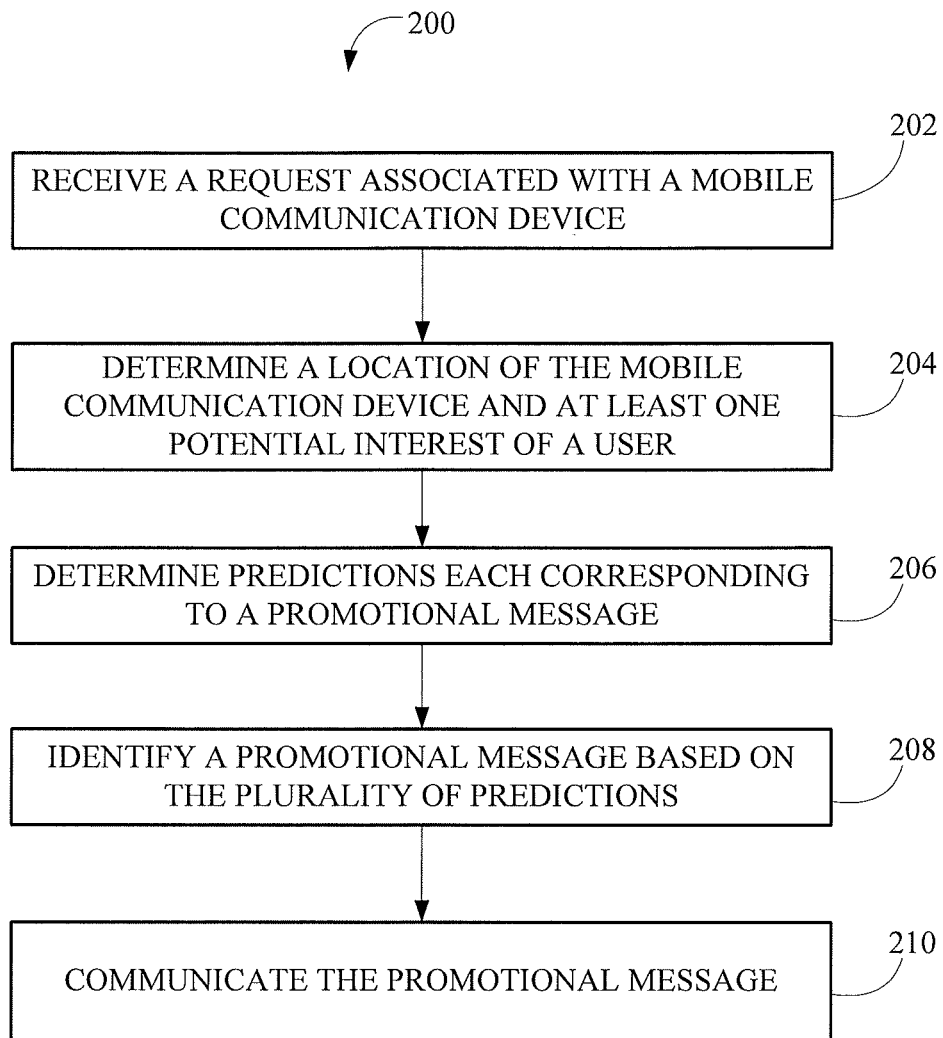


FIG. 2

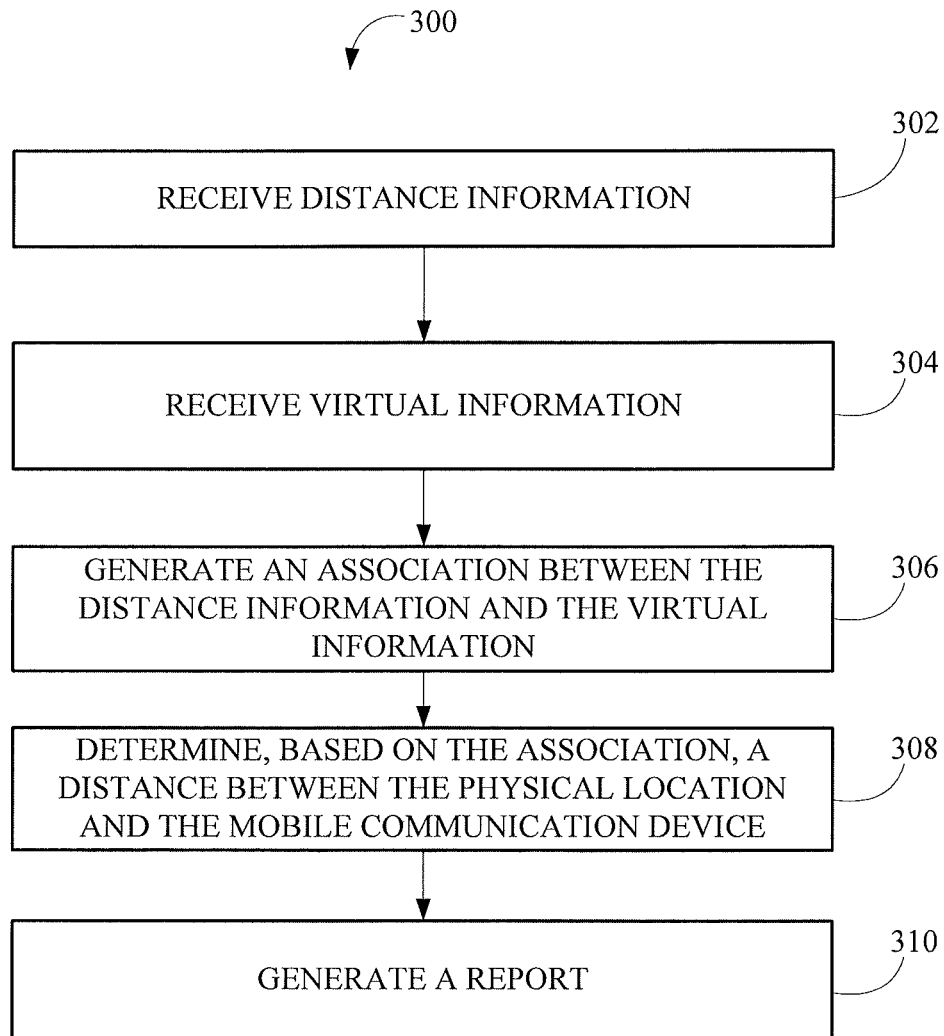


FIG. 3

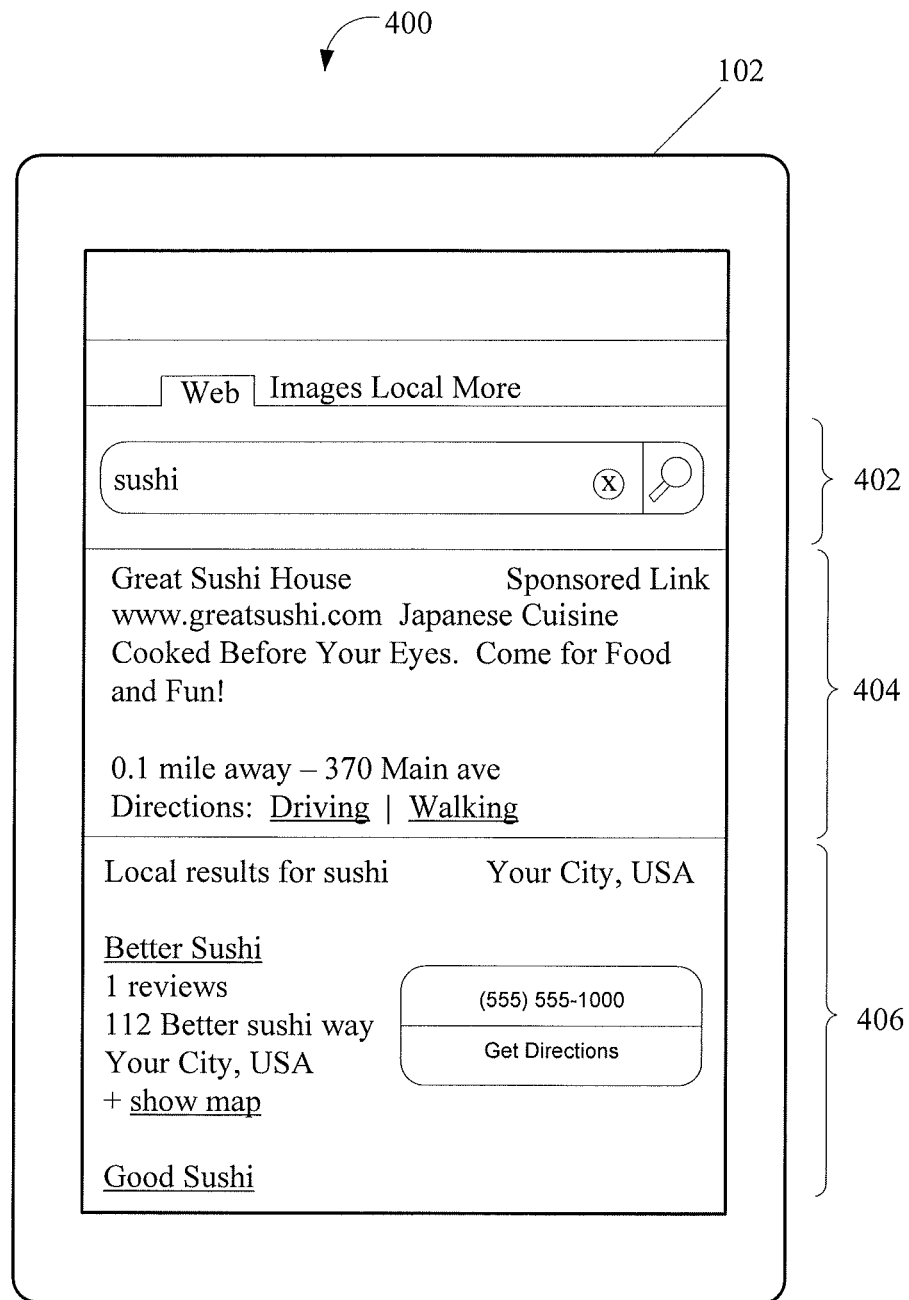


FIG. 4

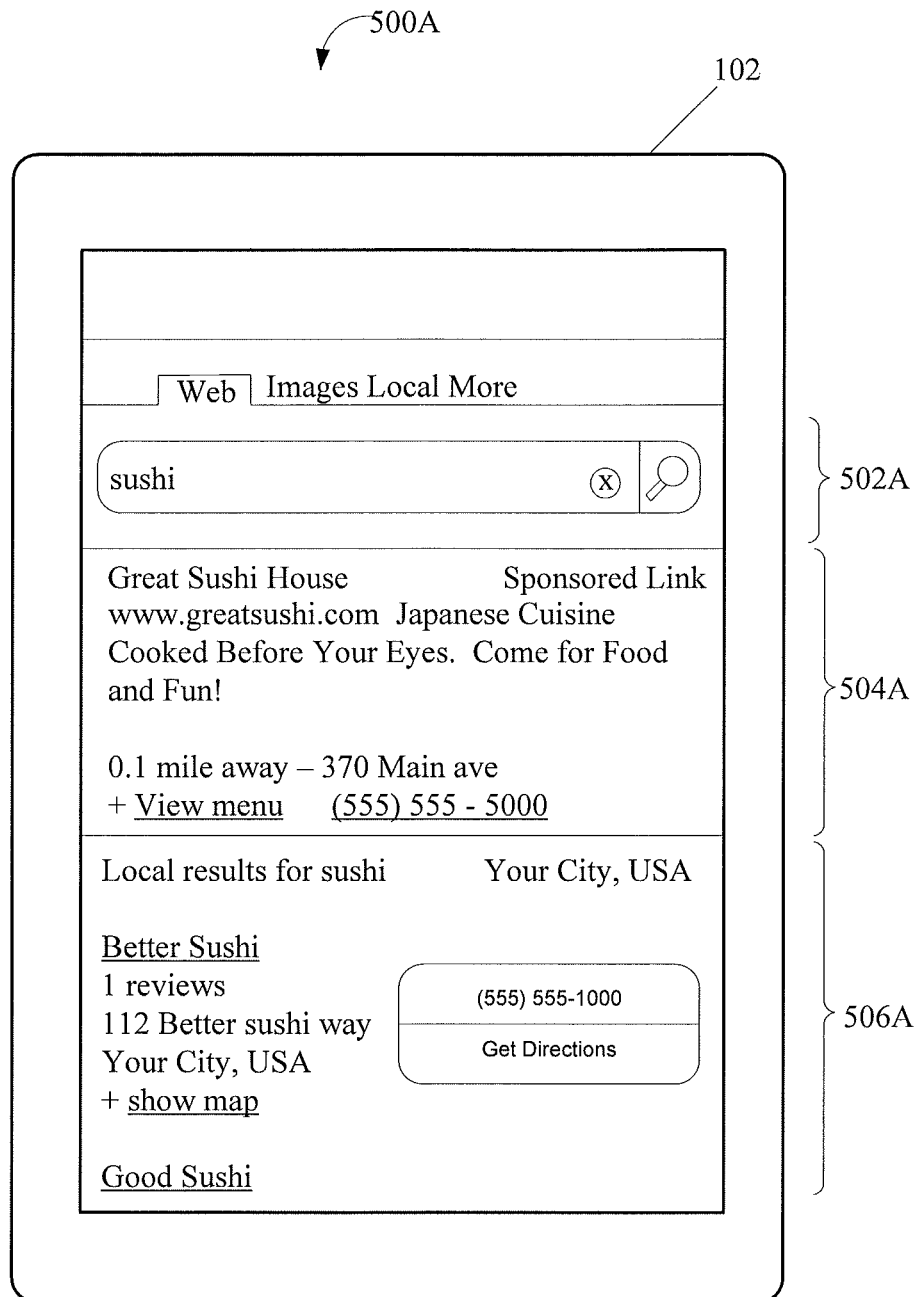


FIG. 5A

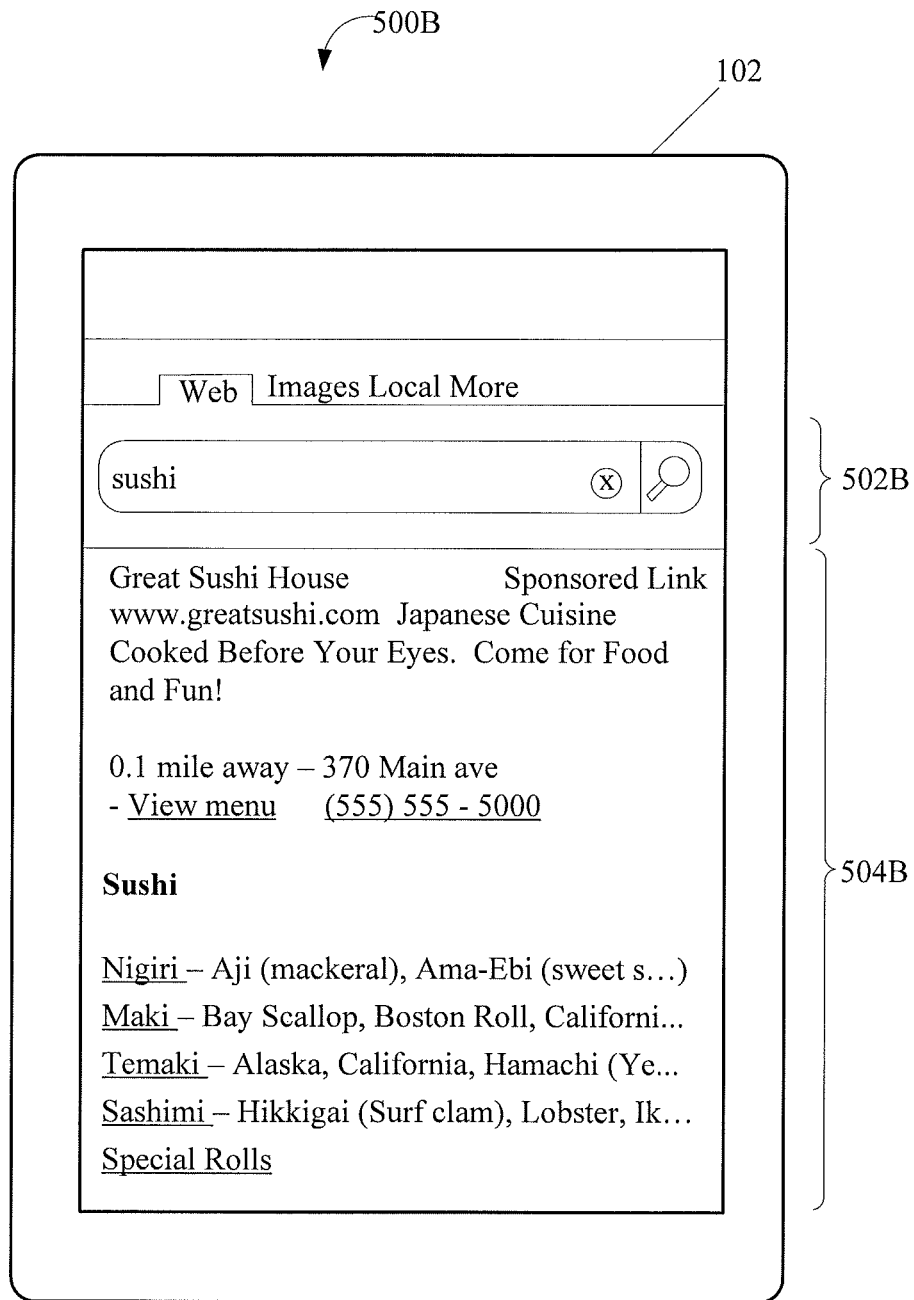


FIG. 5B

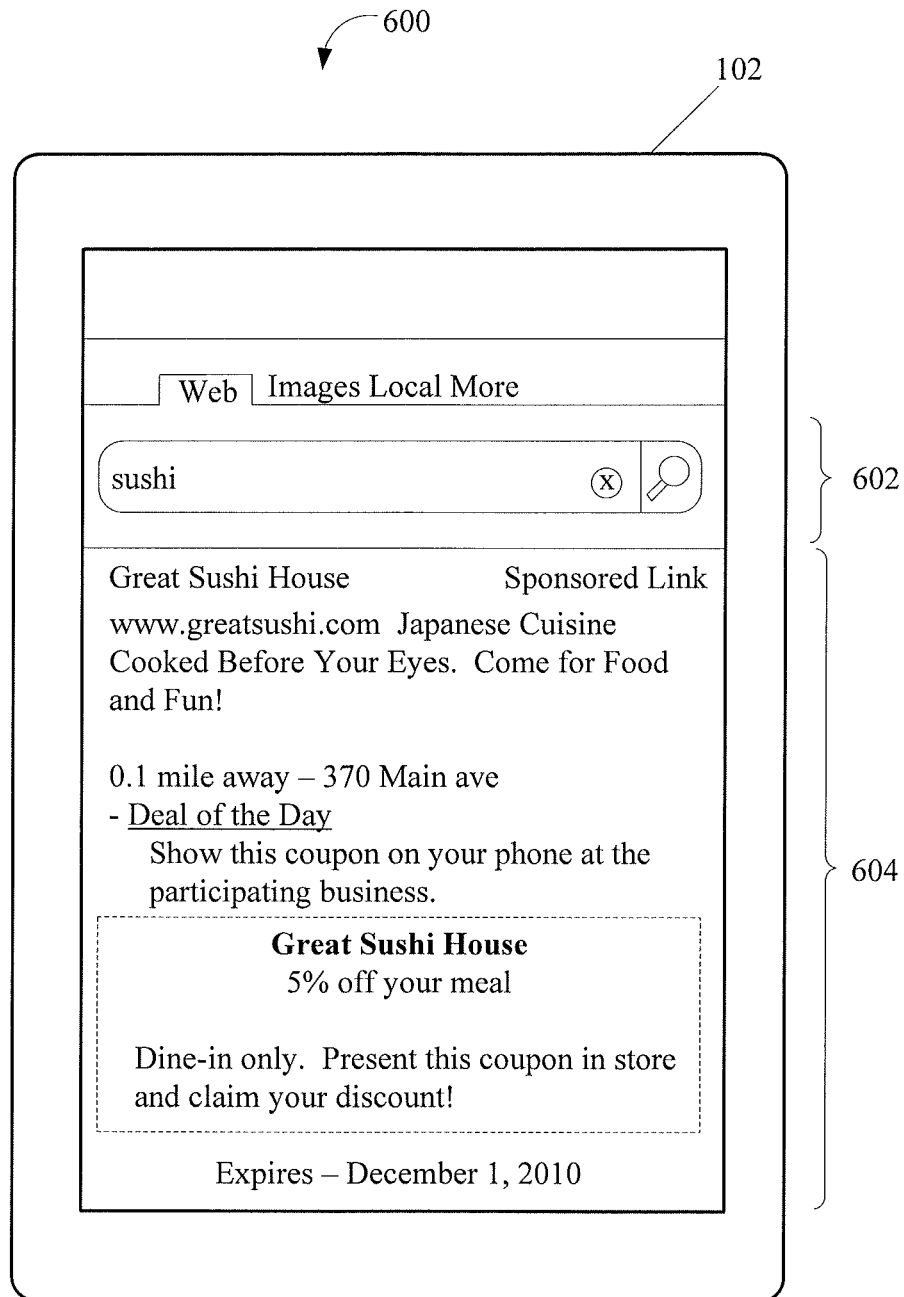


FIG. 6

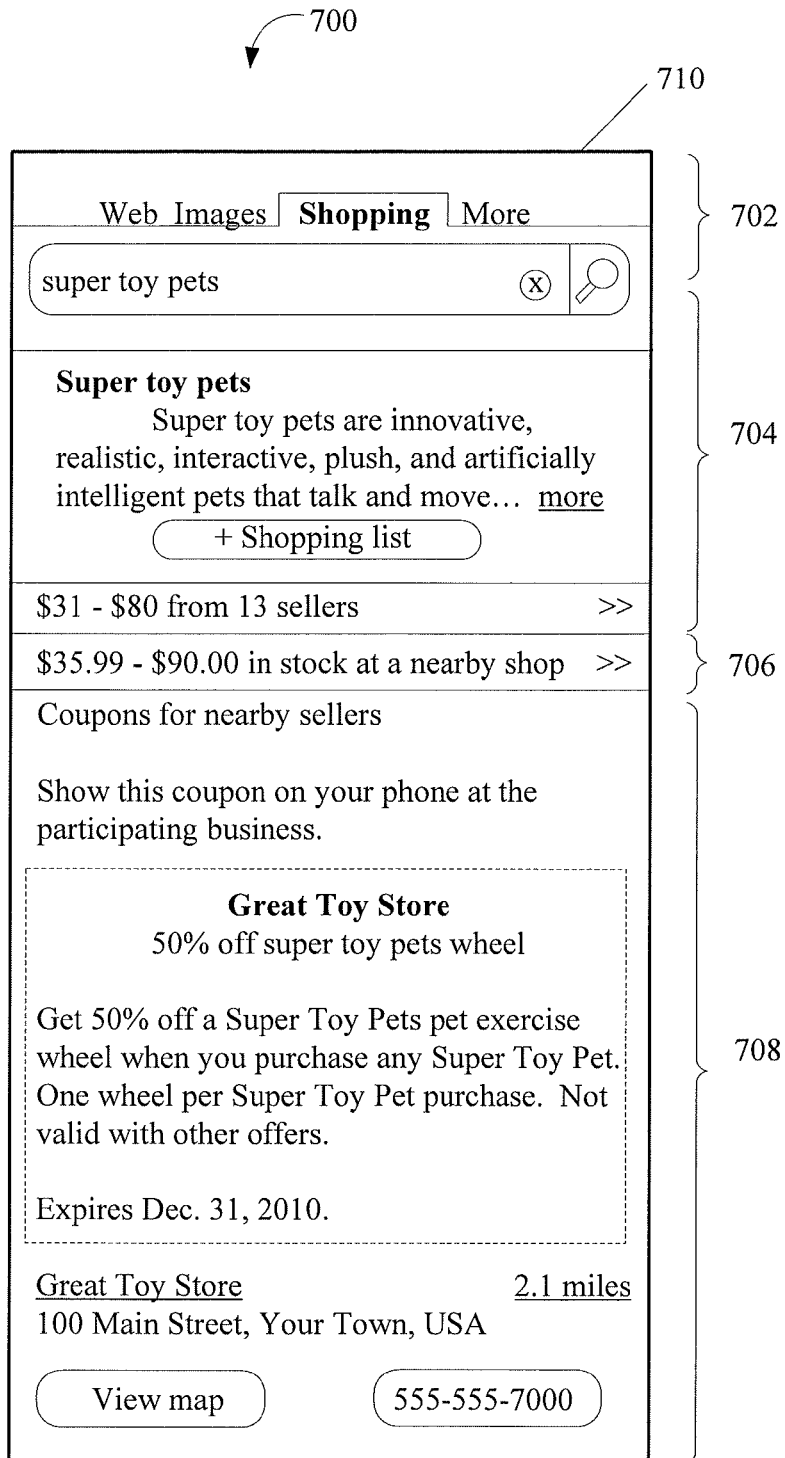


FIG. 7

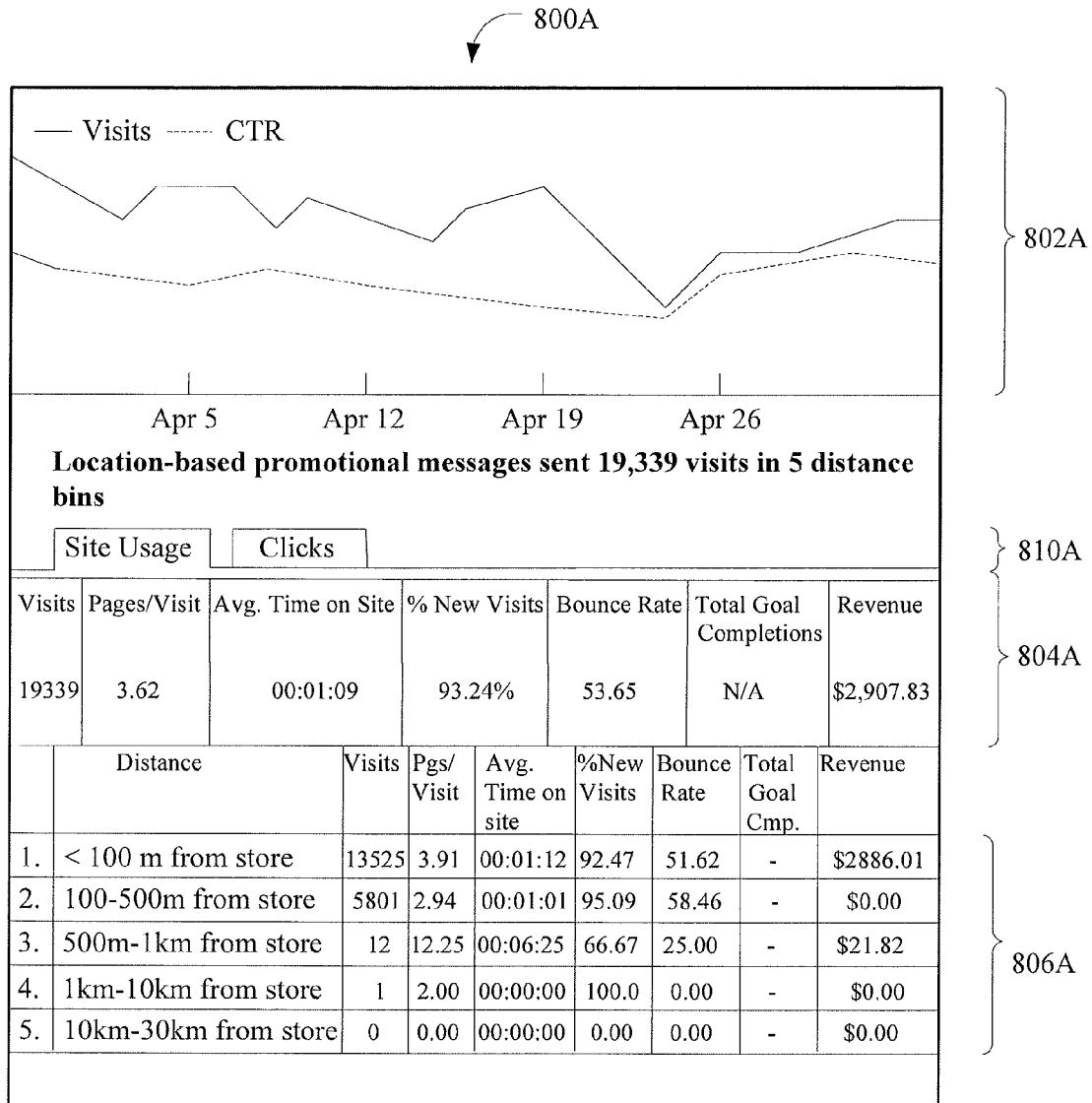


FIG. 8A

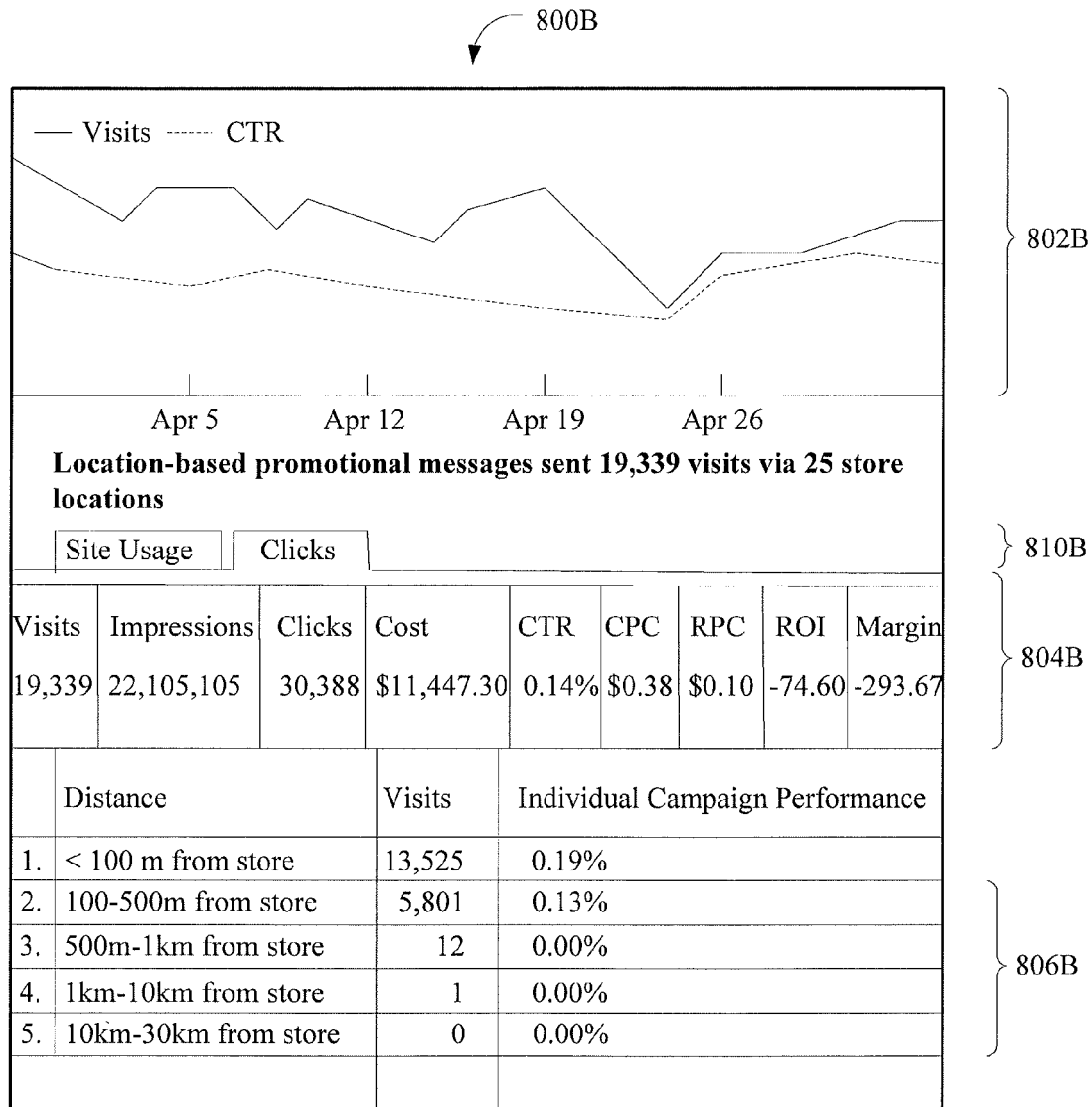


FIG. 8B

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GENERATING CONTENT FOR PROMOTIONAL MESSAGES BASED ON DISTANCE

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

The present application is a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 12/851,833, filed Aug. 6, 2010, the entire disclosure of which is hereby expressly incorporated herein by reference.

FIELD

The disclosure relates to generating promotional messages communicated to mobile communication devices and in particular to identifying promotional messages to be communicated to mobile communication devices based on distances between the devices and physical locations of entities associated with the promotional messages.

BACKGROUND

An increasing number of services use location-based information to determine content provided to mobile communication devices. For example, using location-based information, a service provider or other entity may indicate points of interest within close proximity to (i.e., within a particular distance of) the mobile communication device. In this manner, a user of the mobile communication device may determine nearby points of interest such as restaurants, shopping centers, or other points of interest.

Some conventional systems use location-based information to identify promotional messages to be delivered to mobile communication devices. However, these systems typically are one-dimensional in that location without interest-based information is used to identify the promotional messages. Thus, conventional location-based systems fail to incorporate interest-based information when identifying promotional messages that are communicated to the mobile communication device. In this manner, a promotional message may impose a feeling of "spam" to the user. For example, a vegetarian may not be interested in a promotional message such as an advertisement for a steak-house merely because the vegetarian is nearby the steak-house.

Conventional systems also fail to analyze and/or provide metrics on the effects of distance on a promotional campaign. The distance between a mobile communication device and a physical location of an entity such as a brick-and-mortar store of a retailer may affect success rates of a promotional campaign. For example, a promotional message communicated to a mobile communication device may be more effective when the mobile communication device is closer to a physical location than when the device is farther from the physical location. Likewise, different types of promotional messages may be more effective than other types of promotional messages when the mobile communication device is closer to a physical location than when the device is farther from the physical location.

Conventional systems fail to provide these and other metrics that allow discovery of effects of distance on promotional messages. Thus, advertisers and other entities may be unable to determine effectiveness of various promotional campaigns based on a combination of user interests and distance from a physical location.

What is needed is a method that takes both location of a mobile communication device and interests of a user into

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account to provide location-based promotional messages. What is further needed is a method that provides metrics on the effects of distance on promotional messages so that promotional content may be identified based on a combination of user interests and distance from physical locations of an entity. These and other problems exist.

SUMMARY

Various embodiments of the present disclosure are generally directed to an apparatus and method for transferring promotional messages to a mobile communication device.

In accordance with some embodiments, a promotional message is generated for display on a mobile communication device. The promotional message is associated with an entity having a physical location. The promotional message comprises a plurality of different types of content each associated with a different distance between the mobile communication device and a physical location of the entity. The generated promotional message is thereafter stored in a memory.

In further embodiments, a controller selects and transfers the promotional message to the mobile communication device responsive to a detected distance between the mobile communication device and the physical location. The transferred promotional message displays, on the device, a selected one of the different types of content corresponding to the detected distance.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a block diagram illustrating a system of communicating location-based promotional messages to mobile communication devices, according to various implementations of the disclosure.

FIG. 2 is a flow diagram illustrating an example process of communicating location-based promotional messages to mobile communication devices, according to various implementations of the disclosure.

FIG. 3 is a flow diagram illustrating an example process of reporting effectiveness of location-based promotional messages delivered to mobile communication devices, according to various implementations of the disclosure.

FIG. 4 is a diagram illustrating a location-based promotional message with directions displayed at a mobile communication device, according to various implementations of the disclosure.

FIGS. 5A and 5B are diagrams illustrating a location-based promotional message with expandable content displayed at a mobile communication device, according to various implementations of the disclosure.

FIG. 6 is a diagram illustrating a location-based promotional message with expandable content displaying a coupon at a mobile communication device, according to various implementations of the disclosure.

FIG. 7 is a diagram illustrating examples of screen shots of a promotional message displayed along with a shopping application, according to various implementations of the disclosure.

FIGS. 8A and 8B are diagrams illustrating a screenshot of a report that includes one or more metrics indicating effects of distance on success of promotional messages, according to various implementations of the disclosure.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

FIG. 1 is a block diagram illustrating a system 100 of communicating location-based promotional messages to

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mobile communication devices, according to various implementations of the disclosure. Promotional messages may include, but is not limited to, advertisements, coupons, restaurant menus, directions, and/or other promotional content. According to various implementations of the disclosure, system 100 may include, but is not limited to, a promotional message serving system 110, a metrics analysis system 120, a mobile communication device 102 (illustrated in FIG. 1 as a plurality of mobile devices 102A, 102B, 102N), and a client device 104 (illustrated in FIG. 1 as client devices 104A, 104B, 104N).

In some implementations of the disclosure, promotional message serving system 110, metrics analysis system 120, mobile communication device 102, and client device 104 may be coupled to one another via a network 106. Network 106 may include a Local Area Network, a Wide Area Network, a cellular communications network, a Public Switched Telephone Network, and/or other network or combination of networks.

In some implementations of the disclosure, promotional message serving system 110 may receive a request associated with mobile communication device 102. In some implementations of the disclosure the request includes a request for a promotional message to be delivered to mobile communication device 102. In some implementations of the disclosure, the request is associated with a “pull” request where mobile communication device 102 requests information. In other words, the request may include or otherwise originate from the pull request such that results from the pull request can include the promotional content. For example, the pull request may include, but is not limited to, keyword search terms for conducting an online search, a request for promotional messages from an application executing on mobile communication device 102, and/or other request for information originating from mobile communication device 102. In a non-limiting example, a user of mobile communication device 102 may be near a shopping district and enter a keyword search term “jeans” in order to find retailers that sell jeans. In another example, the pull request may be associated with a location-based application executing on mobile communication device 102. The location-based application when executed by mobile communication device 102 may, for example, find nearby points of interest. The request may include or originate from the pull request (such as the search request or the location-based application request) to cause one or more promotional messages to be displayed with the results of the pull request.

In some implementations of the disclosure, the request is associated with a “push” request where information is communicated to mobile communication device 102 based on predefined settings. In a non-limiting example, the push request may include a subscription to one or more promotional messages of an entity such as a clothing retailer. The subscription may, for example, include pushing to mobile communication device 102 promotional messages that: indicate sales events, include coupons, or otherwise conveys promotional messages.

In some implementations of the disclosure, in response to the request, promotional message serving system 110 may determine a location of mobile communication device 102 and at least one potential interest of a user of mobile communication device 102. In some implementations of the disclosure, the location is determined based on location-based information. In some implementations of the disclosure, the at least one potential interest of the user is determined based on interest-based information.

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In some implementations of the disclosure, the location may be directly determined based on the location-based information. For example, the location-based information may include, but is not limited to, latitude and longitude coordinates. In some implementations of the disclosure, the location may be determined based on an approximation based on the location-based information. For example, the location-based information may include, but is not limited to, an identifier that identifies a cellular tower in communication with mobile communication device 102. The range and/or location of the cellular tower may be known so that an approximate location of mobile communication device 102 may be determined.

In some implementations of the disclosure, the location-based information may include, but is not limited to, Global Positioning System (GPS) information, Wireless Local Area Network information such as WiFi information, cellular tower information, an Internet Protocol (IP) address, prior keyword search information (which may suggest a location), map application information (such as a geographic map or directions displayed at mobile communication device 102), and/or other information from which the location may be determined.

In some implementations of the disclosure, the location may be determined based on a hierarchical ranking of location-based information based on reliability, accuracy, precision, and/or other performance metric. For example, a first location-based information may be more reliable, accurate, precise, or otherwise more effective for determining the location than a second location-based information. When the first location-based information is not available, the second location-based information may be used. A third location-based information may be used when the second location-based information is not available, and so-on. In some implementations of the disclosure, when the user of mobile communication device 102 grants permission to communicate the location-based information, the granted location-based information may be hierarchically higher than (i.e., preferentially used over) other location-based information.

In some implementations of the disclosure, interest-based information may include actions or other behavior of the user of mobile communication device 102 that potentially indicates content that is interesting to the user. In other words, actions or behavior of the user may indicate interests of the user. In some implementations of the disclosure, interest-based information may include, but is not limited to, one or more keywords of a search, prior selections of promotional messages (i.e., promotional messages and/or types, such as coupons, advertisements, etc., of promotional messages that the user has previously selected), a history of web pages visited by the user, and/or other information that may indicate one or more interests of the user.

For instance, based on search terms that include planetary names or star names, promotional message serving system 110 may determine that the user is potentially interested in astronomy. Based on a history of user selections of promotional messages that advertise shoe specials, for example, promotional message serving system 110 may determine that the user is potentially interested in shoes (or more generally, that the user is interested in shopping). Based on a history of user web page visits to sports scores, for example, promotional message serving system 110 may determine that the user is potentially interested in sports. Thus, based on interest-based information, potential interests of the user may be determined.

As used herein, “selecting” or “selection of” promotional messages includes, but is not limited to, clicking with a finger,

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a stylus, or other object; shaking or tapping mobile communication device **102**; uttering a verbal command; and/or taking any other action in relation to mobile communication device **102** to indicate a selection of a promotional message.

In some implementations of the disclosure, the interest-based information may be stored at mobile communication device **102** (and subsequently communicated to promotional message serving system **110**), at promotional message serving system **110**, and/or other location accessible by promotional message serving system **110** to identify an appropriate promotional message. In some implementations of the disclosure, as would be appreciated, promotional message serving system **110** and/or mobile communication device **102** may store or otherwise have access to a user profile that identifies the user and includes the interest-based information of the user.

In some implementations of the disclosure, promotional message serving system **110** may identify, based on the location of mobile communication device **102** and the at least one potential interest of the user, a promotional message from among a plurality of promotional messages. In some implementations of the disclosure, the plurality of promotional messages is included within a queue of promotional messages that are to be communicated via a promotional or advertising network. Because the promotional message is identified based on a combination of the location of the user (as determined from the location of mobile communication device **102**) and a potential interest of the user, the identified promotional message may have a likelihood of being selected by the user that is greater than a promotional message identified based on only one of the location or the interest of the user.

In some implementations of the disclosure, a user may, for example, enter a search key word “shopping” using mobile communication device **102**. Based on a determined location of mobile communication device **102** and a determined interest of the user (such as an interest in shoes), promotional message serving system **110** may identify a particular promotional message that indicates a special on shoes from a shoe store that is within close proximity to (i.e., a specified distance from) the user. In this manner, both the interest of the user and the location of the user is used to identify the particular promotional message. In contrast, conventional systems may communicate a promotional message for fishing gear merely because a fishing goods store is nearby even though the user has not indicated interest in such gear. In these conventional systems, the promotional message may have a feeling of “spam” to the user.

In some implementations of the disclosure, promotional message serving system **110** may communicate the promotional message to be displayed at mobile communication device **102**. In some implementations of the disclosure, promotional message serving system **110** may communicate the identified promotional message to a third party that subsequently communicates the promotional message to mobile communication device **102**. In some implementations of the disclosure, promotional message serving system **110** may communicate the identified promotional message to mobile communication device **102**.

In some implementations of the disclosure, promotional message serving system **110** may generate, based on the location and the at least one potential interest, a plurality of predictions each corresponding to one of a plurality of promotional messages. Each prediction may indicate a probability that a corresponding promotional message will be selected by a user of mobile communication device **102**. Thus, in some implementations, the location of mobile device **102** and the interest of the user may affect the probability that a promo-

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tional message will be selected. For example, a first promotional message having a higher probability of being selected than a second promotional message may be identified to be delivered or communicated to mobile communication device **102** instead of the second promotional message. In these implementations, promotional message serving system **110** may identify a promotional message based on the predictions. In other words, promotional message serving system **110** may identify promotional messages that are more likely to be selected by the user than other promotional messages based on the location and user interests.

In some implementations of the disclosure, promotional message serving system **110** may determine, based on the location of mobile communication device **102**, a distance between mobile communication device **102** and a physical location of an entity associated with the promotional message. In these implementations, a prediction corresponding to the promotional message may be based on the distance and the interests of the user. For example, at least some of the plurality of promotional messages (such as the messages in the queue of promotional messages) may be associated with or otherwise originate from an entity such as a retailer that operates a physical location such as a retail store. In some implementations of the disclosure, promotional message serving system **110** may determine a distance between mobile communication device **102** and the physical location of the entity. In these implementations, the probability that the user will select a particular promotional message may increase as the user gets closer to the physical location of the entity. As such, promotional message serving system **110** may use the distance between mobile communication device **102** and the physical location of the entity when determining the prediction corresponding to the promotional message from the entity.

For example, a first promotional message may be associated with or otherwise originate from a first entity having a physical location that has a first distance from the user (i.e., mobile communication device **102**). A second promotional message may be associated with or otherwise originate from a second entity having a physical location that has a second distance from the user that is greater than the first distance. A third promotional message may be associated with or otherwise originate from a third entity such as an Internet-only retailer that has no physical locations. In the foregoing examples, assuming the promotional messages are associated with the same level of interest from the consumer, promotional message serving system **110** may determine a higher probability of being selected by the user for the first promotional message than the second promotional message and a higher probability of being selected by the user for the second promotional message than the third promotional message. As would be appreciated, the prediction may be based on a balancing of distance/location and interest-based factors.

In some implementations of the disclosure, each of the plurality of promotional messages may be associated with a bid. The bid may include a value or other indication that indicates a dollar or other currency amount that an originator, such as an advertiser, of a promotional message is willing to pay to have the promotional message displayed in the advertising network to which promotional message serving system **110** has access. For example, promotional message serving system **110** may receive or otherwise obtain the bid. In these implementations, promotional message serving system **110** may determine an expected revenue return value based on the bid value and the prediction corresponding to the promotional message and may identify a promotional message based on the expected revenue return value. In other words, promo-

tional message serving system **110** may identify promotional messages in a manner that is expected to maximize fees from entities such as advertisers that wish to promote their goods and/or services via promotional messages.

In some implementations of the disclosure, the expected revenue return value is given by the equation:

$$E = pxb \quad (1)$$

In equation (1): E is the expected revenue return value (obtained by the product of p and b); p is the probability that the promotional message will be selected by the user; and b is the bid. Thus, in some implementations, the expected revenue return value may be based on a combination of the prediction/probability of being selected (which itself may be based on the location and the interest of the user) and the bid. In these implementations, the bid may be sufficiently high to overcome a prediction with a low probability and vice versa.

In some implementations of the disclosure, p is a function of various input predictive factors, x, as given by the equation:

$$p = f(x) \quad (2)$$

In equation (2), x may include, for example, distance from physical location, interest-based information, historical performance of promotional messages (such as whether a promotional message was selected by the user), and/or other predictive factors described below. Based on one or more of the predictive factors, a probability that a promotional message will be selected by the user may be generated.

In some implementations of the disclosure, the bid is changed as a function of the distance, d, as given by the equation:

$$b = g(d) \quad (3)$$

In other words, promotional message serving system **110** may associate different bids of a promotional message for different distances. For example, an entity such as an advertiser may be willing to pay more for a promotional message delivered to the user via mobile communication device **102** when the user is at a closer distance from a physical location than a farther distance. The entity may submit—and promotional message serving system **110** may receive—different bids for different distances.

In some implementations of the disclosure, content of the promotional message is changed as a function of the distance. In other words, promotional message serving system **110** may cause different content of the promotional message to be communicated to mobile communication device **102** based on the distance between mobile communication device **102** and a physical location of an entity associated with the promotional message. In this manner, an entity such as an advertiser may choose to display different content based on different distances from a physical location of the entity. The content may include, but is not limited to, walking directions to the physical location, an input to make reservations, an input to search product availability, one or more images associated with the physical location, one or more promotional offers, a restaurant menu, a business update, a phone number call-to-action, an ad check-in, one or more upcoming events, and/or other promotional content. For example, when mobile communication device **102** is at a first distance from the physical location, promotional message serving system **110** may cause coupons to be delivered to mobile communication device **102**. When mobile communication device **102** is at a second distance closer than the first distance, promotional message serving system **110** may cause directions to be delivered to mobile communication device **102**. As would be appreciated, different permutations of different content at

different distances may be used. The different permutations may be specified by the entity and/or be determined by promotional message serving system **110**.

In some implementations of the disclosure, the distance is associated with accuracy information that indicates an accuracy of the distance. In these implementations, the prediction corresponding to the promotional message may be based on the accuracy information. For example, promotional message serving system **110** may increase or decrease the probability that the user will be interested in a promotional message based on the accuracy of the location-based information used to determine the location of mobile communication device **102**.

In some implementations of the disclosure, promotional message serving system **110** may determine a weight factor for at least one of the distance and the interest-based information. In these implementations, the plurality of predictions is based on the determined weight factor. The weight factor may increase or decrease a weight given to the distance and/or interest-based information when generating a prediction of the probability that a user will be interested in a promotional message. In some implementations of the disclosure, the weight factor is used to emphasize more important or otherwise more predictive factors. For example, the location of mobile communication device **102** may be more heavily weighted than a history of web page visits. In this non-limiting example, promotional message serving system **110** may generate a prediction that relies more on the location of mobile communication device **102** than the history of web page visits. In this manner, different (location and interest) variables may be weighted differently so that the corresponding effect of each variable on the overall predication may be controlled.

In some implementations of the disclosure, promotional message serving system **110** may receive an indication that the promotional message was selected at mobile communication device **102** and may generate a plurality of subsequent predictions based on the indication. In other words, one or more user actions associated with mobile communication device **102** may be collected for subsequent analysis and predictions. Thus, the predictions generated by promotional message serving system **110** may change over time based on interest-based information.

In some implementations of the disclosure, the predictions are based on logistic regression analysis. For example, a prediction that a particular promotional message will be selected by the user may be generated. The prediction may be based on a variety of predictive factors such as different types of user-based interest described herein, distance from physical locations, and/or other factors used to predict whether the particular promotional message will be selected. One or more predictive factors may be assessed according to a click-through rate or other indication that the user selected the particular promotional message.

In some implementations of the disclosure, future predictions generated by promotional message serving system **110** may be based on a weighting of the predictive factors relative to one another based on whether the particular promotional message was selected by the user. In this manner, more important predictive factors (i.e., better predictors) may be weighed more heavily than less important predictive factors. Thus, more important predictive factors may affect the prediction outcome to a greater degree than less important predictive factors. For example, if smaller distances between a user (measured via mobile communication device **102**) and a physical location is correlated with higher click-through rates than larger distances, then distance information may be

weighted accordingly so that it is a relatively important predictive factor. If a history of prior promotional message selections by the user is a weak predictor of future selections by the user, then the history of the particular user may be assigned a lower weight. By fine-tuning the weights of these and other predictive factors, predictions that adapt to observed behavior may be achieved.

In some implementations of the disclosure, weighting of the predictive factors may be fine-tuned in this manner until an acceptable level of accuracy (such as a particular click-through rate) is achieved or otherwise until fine-tuning is no longer necessary. In some implementations, the predictive factors may be fine-tuned indefinitely as data becomes available.

According to various implementations of the disclosure, promotional message serving system 110 may include a processor 112, a memory 114, and/or other components that facilitate the functions of promotional message serving system 110 described herein. In some implementations of the disclosure, processor 112 includes one or more processors configured to perform various functions of promotional message serving system 110. In some implementations of the disclosure, memory 114 includes one or more tangible (i.e., non-transitory) computer readable media. Memory 114 may include one or more instructions that when executed by processor 112 configures processor 112 to perform the functions of promotional message serving system 110.

In some implementations of the disclosure, metrics analysis system 120 may generate one or more reports that illustrate effectiveness of location-based promotional messages delivered to mobile communication devices 102. A promotional message may be “effective” or otherwise successful based on whether the promotional message increases virtual accesses (such as web page visits) to a virtual location such as a web page, enhances virtual access duration, enhances click-through-rates (CTRs), and/or otherwise causes increased sales or increased exposure of goods/services. The one or more reports may be accessed using client device 104.

In some implementations of the disclosure, metrics analysis system 120 may receive distance information and virtual information. The distance information may indicate a distance between mobile communication device 102 and a physical location of an entity such as a retailer. The virtual information may indicate a virtual access by mobile communication device 102 to a virtual location of the entity. The virtual location may include online content such as a web page or other electronic content of the entity that can be accessed by mobile communication device 102. The virtual access may include an access, such as a web page visit, by mobile communication device 102 to the virtual location.

In some implementations of the disclosure, metrics analysis system 120 may generate an association between the distance and the virtual access. In other words, metrics analysis system 120 may associate a location of mobile communication device 102 with the virtual access that occurred. In this manner, based on the association, metrics analysis system 120 may determine a distance from the physical location of the entity when mobile communication device 102 accessed the virtual location of the entity.

In some implementations of the disclosure, metrics analysis system 120 may generate a report that includes an indication of the distance information and at least a portion of the virtual information based on the determined distance from the physical location. The indication of the distance information may include a range of distances (such as, for example, “less than 100 meters from the physical location”), the actual distance from the physical location (such as “50 meters from the

physical location”), and/or other indication that conveys the determined distance. In this manner, metrics analysis system 120 may achieve reporting capabilities that allow an entity to determine the effect of distance on success of promotional messages delivered to mobile communication devices 102. For example, metrics analysis system 120 may be used to determine whether promotional messages communicated to mobile communication devices 102 are more effective when communicated at closer distances, measured via the determined distance from the physical location, than farther distances. In other words, metrics analysis system 120 may provide metrics to determine whether promotional messages are more effective at increasing virtual accesses to a virtual location when mobile communication devices 102 are closer to a physical location than farther from the physical location.

In some implementations of the disclosure, the distance information includes a plurality of distances each corresponding to different distances between different mobile communication devices and the physical location. The different distances may include ranges of distances so that multiple data points may be included in the report. In other words, metrics analysis system 120 may generate different distance bins such, but not limited to, “<100 meters from physical location”; “100-500 meters from physical location”; “500 meters-1 kilometer from physical location”; and/or other distance bins. For each distance bin, metrics analysis system 120 may include a number of virtual accesses and/or other metrics of effectiveness of promotional messages. In this manner, the effect of different distances on effectiveness of promotional messages may be included.

In some implementations of the disclosure, metrics analysis system 120 includes revenue information based on the different distances. The revenue information may include a total revenue derived from or otherwise attributable to location-based promotional messages delivered to communication devices 102. In some implementations, the revenue information may include fees, paid by entities such as advertisers, for presenting the location-based promotional messages. In some implementations, the revenue information may include click-through rates, conversion rates, and/or other information that indicates revenue generated by entities such as advertisers as a result of the location-based promotional message being displayed.

In some implementations of the disclosure, the revenue information includes a revenue value associated with one or more of the plurality of distances. In these implementations, metrics analysis system 120 may display the revenue value with the associated one or more of the plurality of distances. In this manner, the effect of different distances on revenue may be analyzed or otherwise determined.

In some implementations of the disclosure, the virtual information may include, but is not limited to, a number of virtual accesses to the virtual location, a click-thru-rate, a number of pages visited during the virtual access, a bounce rate, a percent of new visits, and an average duration of the virtual access. By including these and other virtual information, metrics analysis system 120 may generate reports that display various metrics of effectiveness of promotional messages.

According to various implementations of the disclosure, metrics analysis system 120 may include a processor 122, a memory 124, and/or other components that facilitate the functions of metrics analysis system 120 described herein. In some implementations of the disclosure, processor 122 includes one or more processors configured to perform various functions of metrics analysis system 120. In some implementations of the disclosure, memory 124 includes one or

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more tangible (i.e., non-transitory) computer readable media. Memory **124** may include one or more instructions that when executed by processor **122** configures processor **122** to perform the functions of metrics analysis system **120**.

Mobile communication device **102** may include a mobile device such as a cellular telephone, a personal digital assistant, a tablet computing device, and/or other mobile communication device on which promotional messages can be displayed. However, as would be appreciated, instead of or in addition to mobile communication device **102**, various functions described herein may be applied to other devices such as a desktop computer or other computing devices that are not necessarily portable but can be located using one or more location-based information described herein. Client device **104** may include devices that can access reports and/or virtual locations described herein. For example, client device **104** may include a mobile communication device as described herein, a desktop computer and/or other computing devices.

FIG. **2** is a flow diagram illustrating an example process **200** of communicating location-based promotional messages to mobile communication devices, according to various implementations of the disclosure. The various processing operations and/or data flows depicted in FIG. **2** (and in the other drawing figures) are described in greater detail herein. The described operations for a flow diagram may be accomplished using some or all of the system components described in detail above and, in some implementations of the disclosure, various operations may be performed in different sequences. According to various implementations of the disclosure, additional operations may be performed along with some or all of the operations shown in the depicted flow diagrams. In yet other implementations, one or more operations may be performed simultaneously. Accordingly, the operations as illustrated (and described in greater detail below) are examples by nature and, as such, should not be viewed as limiting.

In an operation **202**, process **200** may receive a request associated with a mobile communication device (such as mobile communication device **102**). The request may include a request for a promotional message. For example, a user of the mobile communication device may input one or more search keywords to execute a search. The search may include an Internet search, a search of the hard-drive of the device, or other search. The search may cause an application executing on the mobile communication device to request a promotional message.

For instance, an Internet browser submitting a search to a web search engine may cause the request for the promotional message. In another example, the user of the mobile communication device may interact with an application such as a gaming application, location-based service application, or other application executing on the mobile communication device. The interaction, such as a logon, initialization, or other action associated with the application may cause the application to request the promotional message. In other words, in some implementation of the disclosure, the request associated with the mobile communication device may include a request for a promotional message that originates from a search request, an application executing on the mobile communication device, or other information associated with the mobile communication device.

In an operation **204**, in response to the request, process **200** may determine a location of the mobile communication device and at least one potential interest of a user of the mobile communication device. In some implementations of the disclosure, the location may be determined based on location information communicated from the mobile com-

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munication device for the purpose of locating the device (such as geographic coordinates communicated by the device when the user has granted location-based information to be communicated). In some implementations of the disclosure, the location may be determined based on location-based information associated with the mobile communication device but not necessarily communicated for the purpose of locating the device. Such location-based information may include, for example, an IP address of the mobile communication device and/or IP address of a carrier of the mobile communication device.

In some implementations of the disclosure, the potential interest of the user may include a determination of what may interest a user based on interest-based information such as, for example, search histories, web browsing histories, promotional messages that were selected by the user, and/or other information that may indicate an interest of the user. In some implementations of the disclosure, the potential interest may be based on subject-matter with varying degrees of specificity. For example, the potential interest may be general, such as a general interest in sports; specific, such as a specific interest in golf equipment; and/or fine-grained, such as an interest in a particular brand of golf equipment. In this example, the user may access a number of sports-related web pages over a period of time. More specifically, the user may access a number of golf-related web pages and visit a particular golf equipment provider's website. This history of web page visits may indicate that the user is potentially interested in sports, more particularly interested in golf, and even more particularly interested in a particular golf equipment manufacturer.

In some implementations of the disclosure, the user may access these virtual locations using the mobile communication device. The history of these accesses may be stored at the mobile communication device or at a location remote from the device. In some implementations of the disclosure, the user may access these virtual locations using a remote device, such as client device **104**, remote from the mobile communication device. In these implementations, the user may be associated with the mobile communication device (via a user profile, a user identifier, or other association) so that process **200** may correlate the potential interests of the user with the location of the mobile communication device. In other words, a user's web browsing history (using the mobile communication device and/or other device) may be combined with the location of the user's mobile communication device to identify promotional messages to be communicated to the user's mobile communication device.

In some implementations of the disclosure, the potential interest may be based on types (i.e., content) of promotional messages. For example, the user may be more interested in coupons than general sale announcements and/or the user may be more interested in walking directions than telephone call links. In this manner, process **200** may determine both the location of the user and potential interests (at various levels of specificity and types) of the user.

In an operation **206**, process **200** may determine, based on the location of the mobile communication device and the at least one potential interest, predictions each corresponding to a promotional message. Each prediction may indicate a probability that a corresponding promotional message will be selected by a user of the mobile communication device. In other words, using both the location of the user (as measured by the location of the mobile communication device) and the interest of the user, process **200** may identify a likelihood that a promotional message will be selected by the user. In the foregoing example, a promotional message from a sporting

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goods retailer may be more likely to be selected by the user than a promotional message from a bakery. Also in the foregoing example, a promotional message from a sporting goods retailer that has a store nearby the user may be more likely to be selected by the user than a sporting goods retailer that has a store that is far from the user.

In an operation 208, process 200 may identify a promotional message from among the plurality of promotional messages based on the plurality of predictions. In other words, based on the probability or likelihood of being selected by the user, process 200 may identify one or more promotional messages. For example, process 200 may identify a promotional message associated with the sporting goods retailer that has a store nearby the user. In an operation 210, process 200 may communicate the promotional message to be displayed at the mobile communication device.

FIG. 3 is a flow diagram illustrating an example process 300 of reporting effectiveness of location-based promotional messages delivered to mobile communication devices, according to various implementations of the disclosure. In an operation 302, process 300 may receive distance information that indicates a distance between a mobile communication device (such as mobile communication device 102) and a physical location of an entity. For example, a user of the mobile communication device may be within a distance such as 500 meters of a physical location such as a store of an entity such as a retailer. Process 300 may receive distance information (such as a location of the mobile communication and/or location of the physical location).

In an operation 304, process 300 may receive virtual information that indicates a virtual access by the mobile communication device to a virtual location of the entity. For example, a user of the mobile communication device may select a location-based promotional message and/or visit a web page of the entity. The virtual information may indicate the selection and/or the visit. In this manner, process 300 may receive information that the user via the mobile communication device has selected or otherwise accessed information related to the entity associated with the location-based promotional message.

In an operation 306, process 300 may generate an association between the distance information and the virtual information. In other words, process 300 may determine a correlation between the location of the mobile communication device and the virtual access. As would be appreciated, process 300 may perform operations 302, 304, and 306 in one or more operations. For example, process 300 may receive an association of the distance and the virtual access in a single operation (or in multiple operations as described).

In an operation 308, process 300 may determine, based on the association, a distance between the physical location and the mobile communication device when the mobile communication device accessed the virtual location. In other words, process 300 may determine the distance between the mobile communication device and the physical location of the entity when the device made the virtual access to the virtual location of the entity.

In an operation 310, process 300 may generate a report that includes at least a portion of the distance information and at least a portion of the virtual information based on the determined distance from the physical location. In other words, process 300 may provide metrics that includes the location of the mobile communication device and information related to the virtual access so that a viewer of the report may determine the effect of distance on promotional messages communicated to the mobile communication device.

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FIG. 4 is a diagram 400 illustrating a location-based promotional message 404 with directions displayed at mobile communication device 102, according to various implementations of the disclosure. FIG. 4 and other drawing figures illustrating examples of displays are for illustrative purposes only. The examples of displays may include or exclude some graphical elements illustrated while adding other graphical elements not otherwise illustrated in the figures as would be appreciated.

In some implementations of the disclosure, mobile communication device 102 may display a search application such as an Internet browser or dedicated search application. The search application may provide a search input area 402 where one or more search keywords (illustrated in FIG. 4 as “sushi”) may be entered. Along with search results 406, the search application may display promotional message 404. In some implementations of the disclosure, promotional message 404 may indicate a distance (illustrated in FIG. 4 as “0.1 mile away”) from a physical location (“illustrated in FIG. 4 as the address “370 Main ave”) of an entity (illustrated in FIG. 4 as “Great Sushi House”) associated with promotional message 404. In some implementations of the disclosure, selection of the distance may cause mobile communication device 102 to display a map of the physical location.

As a result of the search request, the search engine (not otherwise illustrated in FIG. 4) may have made a request, associated with mobile communication device 102, for a promotional message. In response to the request for a promotional message, promotional message serving system 110 may have identified promotional message 404 from among other promotional messages based on the location of mobile communication device 102 and a potential interest of the user of mobile communication device 102. In other words, in some implementations of the disclosure, promotional message serving system 110 may not have identified promotional message 404 if mobile communication device 102 was not sufficiently close to the physical location of the entity. As previously noted, such potential interest may be determined based on interest-based information such as web search history, browsing history, history of selections of promotional messages, and/or other interest-based information.

In some implementations of the disclosure, promotional message 404 includes directions to the physical location. The directions may include walking directions, driving directions, and/or other directions. In some implementations of the disclosure, a user selection of the directions may cause mobile communication device 102 to display a map, route, and/or text directions to the physical location. In some implementations of the disclosure, the map, route, and/or text directions are included as part of promotional message 404 (i.e., content of promotional message 404 may include the map, route, and/or text directions). In some implementations of the disclosure, the map, route, and/or text directions may be provided by mobile communication device 102 or other remote device (rather than being included with promotional message 404).

FIG. 5A is a diagram 500A illustrating a location-based promotional message 504A with expandable content displayed at mobile communication device 102, according to various implementations of the disclosure. Diagram 500A is similar to diagram 400 illustrated in FIG. 4 except that promotional message 504A may include a plus-box (illustrated in FIG. 5A as a plus sign with “View menu” link) that when selected expands to show, for example, a restaurant menu. In some implementations of the disclosure, mobile communication device 102 may display a search application. The search application may provide a search input area 502A where one

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or more search keywords (illustrated in FIG. 5A as “sushi”) may be entered. Along with search results 506A, the search application may display promotional message 504A. In some implementations of the disclosure, promotional message 504A may indicate a distance similar to the distance illustrated in FIG. 4.

In some implementations of the disclosure, promotional message 504A may be expandable. For instance, promotional message 504A includes a restaurant menu and/or menu items. As previously noted, the restaurant menu may be included in promotional message 504A based on the distance. In other words, in some implementations of the disclosure, the entity (illustrated in FIG. 5A as “Great Sushi House”) may specify different promotional messages to be communicated to mobile communication device 102 based on the distance to one of its physical locations (illustrated in FIG. 5A as “370 Main ave”). At a different distance, for example, instead of promotional message 504A that includes the restaurant menu, the entity may have specified communication of a promotional message that includes a coupon (as illustrated in FIG. 6), for example, and/or other promotional content. Thus, the entity may specify different content for different distances.

In some implementations of the disclosure, promotional message 504A may include a call-to-action such as a telephone link that when selected by the user causes mobile communication device 102 to dial the number associated with the telephone link.

In some implementations of the disclosure, upon a user selection of the plus-box, promotional message 504A may expand to reveal additional content as illustrated in FIG. 5B.

FIG. 6 is a diagram 600 illustrating a location-based promotional message with expandable content displaying a coupon at mobile communication device 102, according to various implementations of the disclosure. Diagram 600 is similar to diagram 500A illustrated in FIG. 5A except that promotional message 604 may include a coupon to the retailer when the plus-box (illustrated in FIG. 6 as a plus sign with “Deal of the Day” link) is expanded. In some implementations of the disclosure, mobile communication device 102 may display a search application. The search application may provide a search input area 602 where one or more search keywords (illustrated in FIG. 5A as “sushi”) may be entered.

FIG. 7 is a diagram 700 illustrating an example of a screen shot 710 of a promotional message displayed along with a shopping application, according to various implementations of the disclosure. In some implementations of the disclosure, the shopping application may include a search input area 702 where one or more search keywords (illustrated in FIG. 7 as “super toy pets”) may be entered. Along with shopping results 704, entities selling goods and/or services matching the one or more search keywords and having physical locations nearby may be indicated in results area 706. When selected by the user, results area 706 may cause a device executing the shopping application to display a list of the nearby entities, promotional messages associated with the nearby entities, or other information related to the nearby entities. In some implementations of the disclosure, the shopping application may display promotional message 708, illustrated in FIG. 7 as a coupon for products that match the one or more search keywords. As previously noted, promotional message serving system 110 may have identified promotional message 708 based on the distance from a physical location of the entity associated with promotional message 708 and potential interests of the user.

FIGS. 8A and 8B are diagrams illustrating a screenshot of a report 800 that includes one or more metrics indicating

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effects of distance on success of promotional messages, according to various implementations of the disclosure. Report 800 (illustrated in FIGS. 8A and 8B as reports 800A and 800B) may be generated by metrics analysis system 120 described herein. In some implementations of the disclosure, the report may include a graphical display area 802 (illustrated in FIGS. 8A and 8B as display areas 802A and 802B). The graphical display area 802 may include a line graph, a bar graph, or other graphical display that conveys performance of location-based promotional messages via virtual information such as web page visits, CTRs, and/or other virtual information.

In some implementations of the disclosure, report 800 may include virtual information area 804 (illustrated in FIGS. 8A and 8B as virtual information areas 804A and 804B) displays virtual information such as number of virtual accesses (i.e., visits), average duration of the virtual access (i.e., Avg. Time on Site), and/or other virtual information. In some implementations of the disclosure, the revenue associated with the virtual information may be displayed in virtual information area 804.

In some implementations of the disclosure, report 800 may include distance bin area 806 (illustrated in FIGS. 8A and 8B as distance bin areas 806A and 806B). Distance bin area 806 may display different distance bins that each include virtual information as a function of distance. In other words, the distance bins group virtual accesses based on the distance a mobile communication device is from a physical location of an entity when the device accessed a virtual location of the entity. In this manner, the effect of distance on the effectiveness of promotional messages may be analyzed using report 800.

In some implementations of the disclosure, report 800 may include tabs 810 (illustrated in FIGS. 8A and 8B as tabs 810A and 810B). Selection of tabs 800 may cause report 800 to display another report based on the particular tab 800 that was selected. For instance, the “Site Usage” tab may cause report 800A to be displayed. Report 800A may display virtual information based on virtual accesses, such as visits, to be displayed. The “Clicks” tab may cause report 800B to be displayed. Report 800B may display virtual information based on selections or clicks.

Implementations of the disclosure may be made in hardware, firmware, software, or any suitable combination thereof. Implementations of the disclosure may also be implemented as instructions stored on a machine readable medium, which may be read and executed by one or more processors. A tangible machine-readable medium may include any tangible, non-transitory, mechanism for storing or transmitting information in a form readable by a machine (e.g., a computing device). For example, a tangible machine-readable storage medium may include read only memory, random access memory, magnetic disk storage media, optical storage media, flash memory devices, and other tangible storage media. Intangible machine-readable transmission media may include intangible forms of propagated signals, such as carrier waves, infrared signals, digital signals, and other intangible transmission media. Further, firmware, software, routines, or instructions may be described in the above disclosure in terms of specific exemplary implementations of the disclosure, and performing certain actions. However, it will be apparent that such descriptions are merely for convenience and that such actions in fact result from computing devices, processors, controllers, or other devices executing the firmware, software, routines, or instructions.

Implementations of the disclosure may be described as including a particular feature, structure, or characteristic, but

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every aspect or implementation may not necessarily include the particular feature, structure, or characteristic. Further, when a particular feature, structure, or characteristic is described in connection with an aspect or implementation, it will be understood that such feature, structure, or characteristic may be included in connection with other implementations, whether or not explicitly described. Thus, various changes and modifications may be made to the provided description without departing from the scope or spirit of the disclosure. As such, the specification and drawings should be regarded as exemplary only, and the scope of the disclosure to be determined solely by the appended claims.

The invention claimed is:

1. A computer-implemented method comprising:
 - generating a promotional message for display on a mobile communication device, the promotional message associated with an entity having a physical location, wherein the promotional message comprises a plurality of different types of content, each of the plurality of different types of content associated with a different distance between the mobile communication device and a physical location of the entity;
 - storing the generated promotional message in a memory;
 - determining, using location-based information associated with the mobile communication device, a first location of the mobile communication device;
 - determining a first distance between the first location of the mobile communication device and the physical location;
 - selecting a first type of content from the plurality of different types of content based on the determined first distance, wherein the first type of content comprises a street address of the physical location;
 - transferring the first type of content to the mobile communication device for display thereon responsive to the determined first distance;
 - determining a new location for the mobile communication device;
 - determining a second distance being equal to a distance between the new location and the physical location, wherein the first distance and the second distance are determined responsive to detection of at least one of a cellular tower, a global positioning satellite (GPS) signal, a network signal, a WiFi signal, an Internet Protocol (IP) address, a keyword search term, or a map application;
 - comparing the new location to the first location including determining whether the second distance is less than the first distance and determining whether the new location represents movement of the mobile communication device in a direction toward the physical location;
 - selecting a second different type of content based on the comparing, wherein the second different type of content comprises an image of the physical location; and
 - after the selecting of the second different type of content, transferring the selected second different type of content to the mobile communication device for display thereon.
2. The computer-implemented method of claim 1, in which each of the plurality of different types of content comprises a different selected one of: walking directions to the physical location, an input to make reservations, an input to search product availability, one or more images associated with the physical location, one or more promotional offers, a restaurant menu, a business update, a phone number call-to-action, an ad check-in, or a notice of one or more upcoming events.
3. The computer-implemented method of claim 1, in which the entity transmits each of the plurality of different types of

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content to a promotional message serving system adapted to subsequently transfer the promotional message to a mobile communication device.

4. An apparatus comprising:

- a memory which stores a promotional message associated with an entity having a physical location, the promotional message comprising a plurality of different types of content each associated with a different distance between the physical location and a mobile communication device; and

a controller adapted to:

- determine, using location-based information associated with the mobile communication device, a first location of the mobile communication device;

- determine a first distance between the first location of the mobile communication device and the physical location;

- select a first type of content from the plurality of different types of content based on the determined first distance, wherein the first type of content comprises a street address of the physical location;

- transfer the first type of content to the mobile communication device for display thereon responsive to the determined first distance responsive to the determined first distance;

- determine a new location for the mobile communication device;

- determine a second distance being equal to a distance between the new location and the physical location, wherein the first distance and the second distance are determined responsive to detection of at least one of a cellular tower, a global positioning satellite (GPS) signal, a network signal, a WiFi signal, an Internet Protocol (IP) address, a keyword search term, or a map application;

- compare the new location to the first location including determining whether the second distance is less than the first distance and determining whether the new location represents movement of the mobile communication device in a direction toward the physical location;

- select a second different type of content based on the comparing, wherein the second different type of content comprises an image of the physical location; and
- after the selecting of the second different type of content, transfer the selected second different type of content to the mobile communication device for display thereon.

5. The apparatus of claim 4, further comprising a communication circuit which receives the plurality of different types of content transmitted across a network and stores the plurality of different types of content in the memory.

6. The apparatus of claim 4, in which the controller is further adapted to, responsive to a received request from the mobile communication device:

- identify a population of available promotional messages for potential display on the device, the population of available promotional messages comprising the promotional message, each of the available promotional messages associated with a different entity having a corresponding physical location;

- determine an associated distance between the mobile communication device and each of the physical locations associated with the available promotional messages;

- identify the promotional message from the population of available promotional messages responsive to the deter-

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mined distance between the device and the physical location associated with the promotional message; and

transfer the promotional message with the selected one of the different types of content to the device for display thereon.

7. A computer-implemented method comprising:

receiving a request from a mobile communication device; identifying, in response to the request, a population of available promotional messages for potential display on the device, each of the available promotional messages associated with a different entity having a corresponding physical location;

determining, using location-based information associated with the mobile communication device, a first location of the mobile communication device;

determining a first distance between the first location of the mobile communication device and each of the physical locations associated with the available promotional messages;

selecting a promotional message from the population of available promotional messages responsive to the determined first distance;

identifying a first type of content from a plurality of different types of content associated with the identified promotional message responsive to the determined first distance, wherein the first type of content comprises a street address of the physical location;

transferring the selected promotional message and the identified first type of content to the mobile communication device for display thereon responsive to the determined first distance;

determining a new location for the mobile communication device;

determining a second distance being equal to a distance between the new location and the physical location, wherein the first distance and the second distance are determined responsive to detection of at least one of a cellular tower, a global positioning satellite (GPS) signal, a network signal, a WiFi signal, an Internet Protocol (IP) address, a keyword search term, or a map application;

comparing the new location to the first location including determining whether the second distance is less than the first distance and determining whether the new location represents movement of the mobile communication device in a direction toward the physical location;

selecting a second different type of content based on the comparing, wherein the second different type of content comprises an image of the physical location; and

after the selecting of the second different type of content, transferring the selected second different type of content to the mobile communication device for display thereon.

8. The computer-implemented method of claim 7, in which each of the plurality of different types of content comprises a different selected one of: walking directions to the physical location associated with the promotional message, an input to make reservations, an input to search product availability, one or more images associated with the physical location, one or more promotional offers, a restaurant menu, a business update, a phone number call-to-action, an ad check-in, or a notice of one or more upcoming events.

9. The computer-implemented method of claim 7, in which the selected promotional message is further selected in relation to a detected potential interest of a user of the mobile communication device.

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10. An apparatus comprising:

a memory space which stores a population of available promotional messages each associated with a different entity having a physical location; and

a controller adapted to, responsive to receipt of a request from a mobile communication device:

determine, using location-based information associated with the mobile communication device, a first location of the mobile communication device;

determine a first distance between the first location of the mobile communication device and each of the physical locations associated with the available promotional messages;

select a promotional message from the population of available promotional messages responsive to the determined first distance;

identify a first type of content from a plurality of different types of content associated with the identified promotional message responsive to the determined first distance between the mobile communication device and the physical location associated with the promotional message, wherein the first type of content comprises a street address of the physical location; and

transfer the selected promotional message and the identified first type of content to the mobile communication device for display thereon responsive to the determined first distance;

determine a new location for the mobile communication device;

determine a second distance being equal to a distance between the new location and the physical location, wherein the first distance and the second distance are determined responsive to detection of at least one of a cellular tower, a global positioning satellite (GPS) signal, a network signal, a WiFi signal, an Internet Protocol (IP) address, a keyword search term, or a map application;

compare the new location to the first location including determining whether the second distance is less than the first distance and determining whether the new location represents movement of the mobile communication device in a direction toward the physical location;

select a second different type of content based on the comparing, wherein the second different type of content comprises an image of the physical location; and after the selecting of the second different type of content, transfer the selected second different type of content to the mobile communication device for display thereon.

11. The apparatus of claim 10, in which each of the plurality of different types of content comprises a different selected one of: walking directions to the physical location associated with the promotional message, an input to make reservations, an input to search product availability, one or more images associated with the physical location, one or more promotional offers, a restaurant menu, a business update, a phone number call-to-action, an ad check-in, or a notice of one or more upcoming events.

12. The apparatus of claim 10, in which the selected promotional message is further selected in relation to a detected potential interest of a user of the mobile communication device.

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